

Message Text

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PAGE 01 BAGHDA 00824 200147Z
ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ARA-10 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02
SS-15 ICA-11 TRSE-00 /087 W
-----090466 202103Z /61

R 190844Z APR 78
FM USINT BAGHDAD
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6029
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN
AMEMBASSY BRASILIA
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY JIDDA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK

C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 0824

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PGOV, PDIP, PINR, IZ
SUBJECT: MAJORPURGE OF SENIOR IRAQI DIPLOMATS

REF: BAGHDAD 460 (NOTAL)

1. WITHIN RECENT MONTHS, GOI HAS REMOVED 18 AMBASSADORS INCLUDING ENVOYS TO KEY POSTS LIKE TEHRAN, BONN, JIDDA AND NEW YORK. REGIME ALSO SACKED SEVERAL OFFICIALS AT THE DIRECTOR GENERAL LEVEL OF THE FOREIGN MINISTRY.

2. CHANGES OCCURED DURING OR SHORTLY AFTER CHIEFS OF MISSION CONFERENCES WHICH BROUGHT ALL IRAQI AMBASSADORS AND CHARGES BACK TO BAGHDAD FOR A WEEK OF INTENSIVE MEETINGS WITH THEIR AQI POLITICAL LEADERSHIP. SOME OF THE CHANGES APPEAR TO BE ROUTINE TRANSFERS BUT MOST INVOLVE DISMISSAL OF DIPLOMATS WHO COULD HAVE HOPED TO CONTINUE SERVING IN FORMER CAPACITY OR AS AMBASSADORS ELSEWHERE.
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IN THE CASES WE KNOW MOST ABOUT (REFTEL) THE CAUSE SEEMS TO BE ALLEGATIONS OF PERSONAL CORRUPTION. RUMORS AROUND THAT POLITICAL STANCES OF SOME AMBASSADORS WERE REAL REASON FOR THEIR REMOVAL, BUT WE DO NOT FIND THESE STORIES VERY PERSUASIVE.

3. SINCE MANY OF THESE MEN WERE ACCREDITED TO MORE THAN

ONE COUNTRY, IRAQI REGIME HAS OPPORTUNITY TO FILL A
LARGE NUMBER OF VACANCIES. USINT RECORDS SHOW THAT THERE
IS NO AMBASSADOR ACCREDITED TO 40 COUNTRIES WITH WHICH
IRAQI MAINTAINS DIPLOMATIC RELATIONS.

4. OBSERVERS HERE WILL BE WATCHING TO SEE WHETHER
PROFESSIONAL DIPLOMATS ADVANCE TO THESE POSITIONS
OR WHETHER THEY GO TO BAAATH PARTY STALWARTS. RECENT
APPOINTMENT TO BRAZIL OF ZAYD HAYDAR, FORMERLY A MEMBER
OF BAAATH PARTY NATIONAL COMMAND, WAS SEEN AS A SMART MOVE
BY PRESIDENT BAKR AND SADDAM HUSSEIN TO RID THEMSELVES
OF A SYRIAN EMIGRE WHO HAD BECOME A TROUBLEMAKER FROM
HIS BASE IN BAGHDAD. REGIME ALSO PURGED A NUMBER OF
SENIOR ARMY OFFICERS IN JANUARY AND FEBRUARY AND MAY WISH TO

PUT SOME OF THEM IN DISTANT POSTS JUDGED AS NONSENSITIVE.
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Message Attributes

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